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PERSONAL HISTORY OF THE SECOND EMPIRE.

VIII.—PROSPERITY AND SOCIAL SPLENDOR.

BY ALBERT D. VANDAM, AUTHOR OF "AN ENGLISHMAN IN PARIS," "MY PARIS NOTE-BOOK," ETC., ETC.

THERE is one fact connected with the Second Empire which the nobodies who have lorded it over France since the Empire's fall have not been able to explain away. I allude to the unprecedented prosperity the country enjoyed during those eighteen years. All their attempted explanations to that effect are lame and more than lame; they cannot even limp along; they are positively paralyzed by subsequent facts. The impartial observer, whether he be a Frenchman or a foreigner, who happens to have lived in France under the *régime* of Napoleon III. and under that of the Third Republic cannot help pointing out that during the first-named period the peasant, and for that matter the townsman too, had his "fowl in the pot"; a condition of things which was considered by Henri IV.—not a bad king as kings went in those days—the height of a country's welfare.

The answers to such a remark come glibly enough, and in many instances they are partly epigrammatic, partly philosophical.

"That 'fowl in the pot' on which you lay so much stress," retorted a Republican, "was simply the 'goose with the golden eggs'; the nation was eating both her interest and her capital." That, I maintain, is an absolute falsehood. It could be proved over and over again, if it were necessary, that the war expenses and the war tax of five milliards of francs were paid out of the savings of the population during the previous fifteen or sixteen years, that scarcely an acre of ground was either mortgaged or sold during the two or three years after the

Treaty of Frankfort by those who invested their moneys in those loans. To adduce such proofs would lead me too far astray. I may mention, however, that in many of the smaller provincial centres those loans were almost entirely subscribed in what appeared to be newly minted gold and newly issued bank-notes, both of which tenders, though, turned out on closer examination to have been minted and issued six, seven, eight and twelve years before. The moneys had simply been lying idle during the whole of that time in the linen presses of the peasantry and the *petite bourgeoisie* in accordance with a system that has prevailed in France ever since the peasantry and *petite bourgeoisie* had something to save, a system which will not be entirely abandoned within the next century, if then. If further proofs were wanted of the unexampled prosperity of France between 1855-70, they would be found in a comparison of the reports of the Poor Law Board (*Assistance Publique*) during the Citizen Monarchy and the Third Republic with those of the Second Empire.

It would be sheer folly to pretend that there was no poverty in France during the Second Empire. But from various causes the attitude of "Fortune's favorites" towards the indigent was different from what it is to-day. The self-sufficient, pompous, quasi-virtuous big-wig of the Third Republic flatters himself that he owes his position to talents, energy, and perseverance. Though he can be lavish at times, he is rarely generous; he contents himself with being just—according to his own lights. In the majority of cases he has never had the handling of large sums of money until he wheedled himself or was pitchforked into parliament, diplomacy or office, and, what is worse for the poor, he knows his position to be insecure, and that, therefore, he must make hay while the sun shines.

It is doubtful if the big-wig of the Second Empire ever entertained those fears of relapsing into obscurity and straitened means. Whether talented or not, he was less impressed with his own "high and mightiness" than the Republican. Those whom I have known were almost inclined to laugh in their sleeves at the idea of a providential mission on the part of Queen Hortense's son, let alone at their own share in such a mission. Not a few grinned behind the backs of the worshippers at the Napoleonic shrine, but until a short time before the collapse all had great faith in the cleverness of the high priest, and above all in his

“star.” And inasmuch as he, the high priest, convinced that his “star” would never fail him, gave freely, without stint, almost too lavishly, and certainly too indiscriminately, the majority of his court followed suit in that respect as in every other.*

And in spite of the Republicans’ frequent assertions to that effect, Louis Napoleon’s charity was *not* the result of political and dynastic calculation. It proceeded from the wish to enjoy life himself and to make every one around him enjoy it; for he was essentially the *bon-vivant* in the widest and most beneficent acceptance of the term; the *bon-vivant* whom Marivaux had in his mind’s eye when he said, “*Pour être assez bon, il faut l’être trop.*” His charming ways, his amiability in all things, his disinterested generosity, his appreciation of humor, even when it was directed against himself, have never been surpassed by any monarch; and as a consequence, perhaps no monarch—Charles II. included—has contributed more to his own downfall than he. One instance of that amiability, which under the circumstances might well be called culpable neglect to checkmate his enemies in time, must suffice here. On the 3d November, 1863, Thiers and many other avowed opponents of the Empire resumed their seats at the Palais Bourbon. Morny, in his opening speech as President of the Chamber, alluded in graceful terms to the reappearance of some of his former parliamentary colleagues. “I rejoice to see them once more, and have no doubt about the loyalty of their intentions,” he said. The next morning Morny paid a visit to the Emperor, who complimented him on his eloquence. “Nevertheless,” added Napoleon with a smile, “it strikes me that your reference to the election of M. Thiers was a little—well, a little too intense. You are reported to have said: ‘As for myself, I

*After the fall of the Empire, thousands of begging letters were found at the Tuileries, nearly all of which were annotated in the handwriting of the Emperor himself, mentioning the sums that had been sent in reply. He spent on an average £140,000 per annum in that way—thus £2,500,000 during the eighteen years of his reign. When we consider that this same man left an income of less than £5,000 to his widow, the reader will agree that the words lavish and indiscriminate are not misplaced. We are not concerned here with the private fortune of the Empress, for although it is true that she pledged her jewels in the beginning of September, 1870, in England, in order to face the immediate expenses for herself and her small band of followers, *it is by no means certain that necessity compelled that step.* With regard to the late Emperor’s invincible belief in his “star,” here is another proof. By his will, drawn up while he was still on the throne, everything was left to the Empress, not the smallest provision having been made for the son whom he loved with a deep-seated, almost idolatrous affection. It was because Napoleon III. felt confident that his “star” would prolong his days until he had seen that son firmly established as his successor on the throne. In that case there would have been no necessity to provide for him, and it would have been but right that the Empress should enjoy the revenues. But for that will the Prince Imperial might be alive and on the throne of his father, for he would certainly not have gone to Zululand.

rejoice, etc., etc.' Does not 'rejoice' convey a little too much?" Morny pointed out that he had referred to former colleagues with whom he had then been on the best of terms, and so forth. "Yes, yes," retorted the Emperor gaily; "I had better make up my mind to it; I am surrounded by enemies. There is no doubt about it, you are an Orleanist; decidedly, you are an Orleanist."

The note relating this incident is couched in somewhat critical terms, an unusual tone for my grand-uncles to adopt. It goes on as follows: "I do not like the way things are drifting at the Château (Tuileries). Every one there seems to be master except the master himself. Politics are discussed in the interval between two dances by men and women who have no more idea of such matters than our cook has of anatomy, dissecting and operating. I dare say our cook would indignantly refute such a charge of ignorance by triumphantly pointing to the fowl she has trussed or the joint she has trimmed, and it would be vain on my part, I suppose, to make her understand the difference between operating upon a live body and a dead one. And the Empire, though by no means a healthy body, is very much alive. A few months ago I read a book on *The French Revolution*, by an Englishman,* and one passage struck me as particularly pertinent to the present state of affairs. 'Meanwhile it is singular how long the rotten will hold together, provided you do not handle it roughly.' I am afraid those twenty-three newly elected deputies, five of whom have sat in the Chamber for the last six years, are going to handle the Empire roughly, and the mistake of the Emperor lies in his having given them a chance. He ought to have prevented their return by hook or by crook. The man who made a clean sweep of at least ten times their number twelve years ago* ought not to have afforded any of them an opportunity now of making a clean sweep of him; for that, assuredly, is what they will endeavor to do.

"How long they will have to wait for such an opportunity it would be difficult to determine, but when that opportunity comes they will be ready for it. In fairness to them it should be said that they do not disguise their intentions; the noise they make in preparing their brooms—by stamping the handles on the ground in the orthodox fashion—is loud enough to awaken

* Carlyle's.

any one who is not wilfully deaf ; but they are either that at the Tuileries, or else their own buffooning prevents them from hearing as well as seeing what is going on around them. From what I gather it is not easy to decide whether the latest *travestis* of Meilhac and Halévy and Offenbach are the pure outcome of these gentlemen's imaginations, or simply a faithful picture of some of the scenes enacted now and then at the Château—unless the scenes at the Château are a deliberate attempt to imitate, nay to surpass, Mdle. Schneider, Léonce and their fellow artists. The gods, demi-gods, heroes and heroines of Homer, as portrayed by the authors of *Orphée aux Enfers* and *La Belle Hélène*, and set in motion by that truly magic music of Maître Jacques, are assuredly not more astounding to the unsophisticated, and for that matter to the sophisticated, than a great many of the warriors, clericals, *grandes dames* and *grands seigneurs* constituting the innermost circle at the Court. What, after all, is the high priest Calchas to that astonishing Abbé Bauer, the latest fad, I am told, in the way of ascetic, but at the same time elegant, Christianity ? He is a convert ; he was educated for the Jewish ministry, and if everything the people state be true, Judaism is well rid of him. It appears that a little while ago the abbé tried to convert Adolphe Crémieux, for Crémieux, though baptized when quite an infant, is distinctly a Jew and not a Catholic ; a Jew, moreover, of whom Judaism throughout the world may well feel proud. Of course, the conversion of such a man as Crémieux, if at all feasible, could not be accomplished by an Abbé Bauer, who was more than roughly handled in the encounter. Bauer, however, in spite of his quasi-refined exterior, is a vulgarian to his fingers' ends and thick-skinned besides. Crémieux's hard hitting did not make him wince, and at the end of the interview he said : 'I am very much surprised at your views about the founder of our religion, for I really believe that you are so liberal a Jew as to have legally defended Christ if you had lived in His time.' 'That I certainly should have done,' replied Crémieux, 'and, what is more, I should have got Him acquitted—unless—unless I had been obliged to put the like of you in the witness-box for the defence.' More scathing than even this is Monseigneur Dupanloup's criticism on Abbé Bauer's first sermon before the Court. The preacher, in spite of the warnings of his superiors, had given too much prominence to the Virgin in his

address. '*Place aux dames*,' said the Bishop of Orleans. 'According to Abbé Bauer there is no God, and the Virgin Mary is His mother.'

"I may be permitted to doubt, though, whether this treatment à l'*ancien régime* of sacred subjects, or rather the reintroduction of the perfumed, theatrical, and too worldly abbé into Court circles, by which the Empress wishes to emphasize her admiration for Marie-Antoinette, her surroundings and legitimacy in general, is calculated to give the nation a very exalted opinion of their rulers. One does not want a John Knox thundering against everything, nor does one want an Abbé Bauer 'under-studying' the rôle of a Cardinal de Rohan. Monseigneur Dupanloup, notwithstanding the sally just quoted, is a highly gifted, worthy, and absolutely disinterested prelate. He is thoroughly imbued with the dignity of his sacred office, and although very militant at all times, and often abrupt and the reverse of amiable, he would not condescend to enact the buffoon, or instruct his clergy to that effect, for no matter how good a cause. He would not do evil that good might come. But a great many of his fellow-prelates do not possess the same tact and discrimination. They fulminate, or allow their clergy to fulminate, against the vices and foibles of the hour in a manner which is apt to breed as much contempt for the would-be physician as for the patient. Not long ago a parish priest, inveighing against the *can-can*, actually held up the two sides of his cassock and performed some steps in the pulpit to show his flock how the Holy Virgin danced and how they, his flock, should dance. That priest decidedly beats Calchas in *La Belle Hélène*, but there is a warrior at the Court who beats both the *curé*, the Calchas and the Agamemnon of the *opéra-bouffe*. This is no other than Count Tascher de la Pagerie, who imitates barn-yard fowls, the sun and the moon, by making idiotic grimaces at the command of his imperial mistress, and who is 'trotted out' on all occasions for the amusement of visitors. Count Tascher does not think it incompatible with his rank in the army, his relationship to the Emperor and his position of Chamberlain to the Empress to oblige in that way. He is prouder of those accomplishments than of his birth, the brave deeds of his father, and of everything else besides. After that, people need not wonder at Gustave Doré's performing somersaults and standing on his head for his own amusement, and at his announced in-

tention of abandoning his own career, in which he has already won much fame, for that of Auriol, the clown.

“And it is more than probable that in the intervals of his clowning, this same Count Tascher pretends to lend a hand in the steering of the ‘ship of State,’ for the Tuileries is fast becoming a ‘*cour du roi Pétard et chacun y parle haut.*’”*

“The worst of it is that those whose very existence as a body depends upon their unquestioning obedience and abstention from comment until such comment is invited are becoming infected with the prevailing mania for laying down the law on every conceivable subject. When I say ‘becoming infected’ I put it mildly; in reality they have set the example—I mean the army. I have seen enough of soldiering to know the inestimable value of silent obedience to the orders of one’s superiors. The order may be wrong, and tantamount to a death sentence to its recipient; he is bound to carry it out to the letter. And yet, with the examples of Lords Lucan and Cardigan at Balaclava before them, French officers will go on discussing orders, not only from a military point of view but from a political.

“One instance in point will suffice. The delinquent is gone, and peace be to his ashes! for he was a brave and honorable soldier. But his well-known bravery and uprightness, and, above all, his position near the Emperor as aide-de-camp, called for more circumspection on General de Cotte’s part than he exercised on the occasion alluded to. The thing happened a few evenings before the Emperor’s departure for the Franco-Austrian war. General de Cotte was on duty at the time, and after dinner went down to the smoking-room set apart for the military and civil household. ‘The thing is settled,’ he said aloud, lighting a cigarette; ‘in a day or two we shall be on our way to Italy, unless Providence and the Lunacy Commissioners stop us at the first stage at Charenton.’† Half an hour later the general went upstairs to the Empress’s drawing-room. He had scarcely entered

* In olden times the mendicants, in imitation of the guilds, corporations, and communities in France, annually elected a king, who took the title of King Pétard, from the Latin *peto*. In *Tartuffe*, Orgon’s mother compares her son’s house to the court of King Pétard. “*On n’y respecte rien. chacun y parle haut,*” she says.

† Charenton is the well-known madhouse just outside Paris. At the news of the declaration of war in 1870 Prince Napoleon made a similar remark. He was on his way to the East with Ernest Renan. “Reverse your engines,” he said to the master of the yacht; “we are going back.” “Where to, monseigneur?” was the question. “To Charenton.” The reply was quoted as something spitefully witty and original. It was spiteful, but not original.

the apartment when the Emperor came up to him with a smile. 'My dear general,' he remarked, quietly, 'I have too much respect for the opinion of others, even when they are diametrically opposed to mine, to ask people to fight battles the causes for which they do not approve. You will remain in Paris with the Empress.'

"That did not suit the general's book at all; but he did not utter a word in defence, he only bowed. He was, in fact, too astonished at his comment having reached the ears of the Emperor so soon. As far as he was aware, no servant had entered the room while he was there. He was, then, reluctantly compelled to conclude that an equal had played the part of tell-tale; and that alone would convey a fair idea of the code of honor that obtains among the immediate *entourage* of the sovereigns. Nevertheless, he was not going to be left out of the fighting, so on the 14th of May he simply had his horses and baggage taken to the Imperial train, selected a seat in an empty compartment, and only showed his face at Marseilles. The Emperor merely smiled and held out his hand. This is a sample of the Emperor's amiability, of his willingness to let by-gones be by-gones."

My notes contain a hundred similar anecdotes, all tending to show that the Emperor was *too* good-natured; and I shall have no difficulty in proving, when the time comes, that this excessive *laissez-faire* finally caused his ruin.

As yet, however, the cloud on the horizon is not bigger than a hand, and certainly not visible to the naked eye. And France is too busy enjoying herself to scan the sky with a spyglass. She does not even enact the fable of the hare with the telescope; she remains profoundly ignorant of the approach of her enemy. France resounds with laughter, and above it all rings that modern version of Rabelais' "*Fay ce que voudras*," viz., the chorus of Thérèse's song, "*Rien n'est sacré pour un sapeur*," which chorus paints the moral atmosphere in one line.

For the sapper stood not alone in his irreverence for any and everything. He simply took his cue from those above him, from educated and talented men who deliberately mocked at "the whole world and his wife," including the sovereign and his consort, the former of whom they not only slighted in his private capacity, but as the chief of the State. Rochefort, at a later period, had at any rate the courage to attack openly; the par-

tisans of the d'Orléans *régime* lacked that courage. They sailed as close to the wind as they dared without risking penalties. Strange to say, though, the worst blows to the Emperor's dignity came from the Emperor's friends and *protégés*, and were dealt in fun—" *histoire de s'amuser et d'amuser les autres*." They came in the shape of practical jokes at which Society roared and the victim himself, who was rarely seen to smile, laughed outright.

On the face of it, the jokes perpetrated by "Napoleon III.'s double," as Eugène Vivier was called, may appear trivial. But the startling likeness of the famous cornet-player to the Emperor which made those jokes possible had its influence, nevertheless, on the Emperor personally, and gave rise to the most absurd stories during the heyday of the Empire, and above all at its fall; which stories only tended to diminish the Emperor's prestige.

"Paris is ringing again with another exploit of Vivier," says my note. "This time he has impersonated the Emperor at a supper at Mme. de Païva's and to such good purpose that several of her guests who frequently see and talk to his Majesty were completely taken in. It would appear that about a week ago the Emperor and the Empress were at the Italian opera, where Mme. de Païva's box faces that of their Majesties, and that the glare of the footlights hurt her Majesty's eyes. There was no screen in the Imperial box, and the Empress had only her fan to keep off the heat.* The Emperor remarked quite casually on the inconvenience to one of his aides-de-camp, saying, 'Mme. de Païva is better off than we are; look, what a beautiful Japanese screen she has!' The aide-de-camp in question happened to be on friendly terms with Mme. de Païva, and paid her a visit between the acts. Quite as casually as the Emperor he remarked upon the beauty of the screen, adding that the Emperor would be pleased to have a similar one for the Empress. Thereupon, Mme. de Païva unfastens the screen in question, hands it to her visitor, and bids him offer it to the Emperor with her respectful compliments for the use of the Empress. The aide-de-camp, though considerably embarrassed, dare not refuse the offer, and makes his way to the Imperial box with the screen, which he quietly adjusts in front of the Empress, who, however, sweeps it contemptuously out of her way. The Empress has not got her temper under sufficient control, and often allows it to get the better of her in public; under

* Fans were very small in those days; the large ones date from much later.

such circumstances the Emperor invariably pours oil upon the troubled waters, and he did so in this instance. He picked up the screen, and with a smile placed it in front of himself; and inasmuch as Mme. de Païva had narrowly watched the scene from the other side of the house, he considered himself bound to go and thank her personally the next day or the day after. For that part of the story I will, however, not vouch. I am under the impression that it is a pure fabrication, whether of Mme. de Païva herself or of some of her familiars I am unable to say. Both are equally inventive, and the rumor was evidently set afloat in order to find a basis for the next scene in which Vivier was to play his part. For even if one admits that the Emperor paid the alleged visit, his Majesty would certainly not have followed it up by inviting himself or accepting an invitation to a supper at Mme. de Païva's—at any rate not to a supper in company with a half-score of guests, not one of whom is particularly famed for the art of holding his tongue.

“Be this as it may, the supper with the carefully ‘prepared’ entrance of Vivier, took place and has furnished fresh gossip for at least a week. Practically, the Emperor is powerless to prevent those things; he can neither send Vivier into exile nor condemn him to wear a mask, but there was no necessity to invite Vivier to the Tuileries and to have the performance repeated for the delectation of all and sundry, as the Emperor has done.

“The fact is, Vivier is *persona grata* with Louis Napoleon for a far different reason than people suspect. To begin with, Vivier is a Corsican; secondly, many years ago Vivier gave unsolicited testimony to Louis Napoleon's legitimacy, which has been so often called in question, and on which the Emperor is so exceedingly sensitive. It happened in 1844, while Vivier was giving some performances in London. One day he met a countryman of his with the name of Ceccaldi, who told him that Prince Louis was in London, and that he (Vivier) ought to pay his respects to him. ‘Come to the French Theatre to-night and I will present you,’ said Ceccaldi. At that time Vivier had never set eyes on the Prince, but the moment he entered the theatre he pointed him out to his companion. ‘How do you know?’ asked Ceccaldi; ‘you have never seen him before.’ ‘No,’ was the reply, ‘but I recognized him at once by the like-

ness to his father, to whom I was presented at Pisa.' Then there is the truly startling likeness between the Emperor and Vivier himself. Although it has already led to much mischief, *and may lead to further mischief*,* the Emperor, with his 'big heart,' his somewhat too active imagination, and his fatalism, is almost convinced that Vivier's existence is more or less bound up with his own.

"Thus we have the Jester in Ordinary to the Court, *i. e.*, Count Tascher; the Jester who performs 'by command,' namely, Eugène Vivier; and we have also the *corps de ballet* and the *corps dramatique*, for now and again there are choregraphic and other entertainments, generally arranged by the Princesse von Metternich, who enjoys herself at the Tuileries as she probably would not be allowed to enjoy herself at the Hofburg. The daughter of the famous Count Szandor, who by the by was as mad as a March hare (I mean the father), does not think it necessary to observe the same strict rules of etiquette towards the grandson of a Corsican lawyer and his wife, she would be bound to observe towards a Hapsburg and his spouse, herself a Princesse des Deux-Ponts-Birkenfeld. And to make the resemblance to the ordinary theatre complete, the noble and aristocratic ballerinas quarrel among themselves just like *rats de l'opéra*, issued from *concierges* and cabmen, and would come to blows now and then, like the humbler-born dancers, but for the timely intervention of the Empress."

"Is it a wonder, then, that the Païvas, the Skittles, the Cora Pearls, and the rest shrug their shoulders and smile, nay, laugh outright, at the mention of some of those *grandes dames de par le monde*. I doubt whether many of those *déclassées* be very witty; nevertheless, they are credited now and then with saying things which are worthy of a Ninon de l'Enclos and Rochefoucauld—although I strongly suspect that some of the clever literary men and journalists among their familiars are mainly responsible for the epigrammatic form of those remarks. 'This is perhaps another instance of 'Nemesis at work again,' for if in the beginning of the Empire the papers had been allowed a certain latitude

* I feel convinced that there was no prophetic intent to the words I have underlined in the above note. Nevertheless, after the fall of Sedan there were hundreds of people in France, and above all in Paris, who said that the Emperor was not at Wilhelmshöhe at all, that Vivier had been sent for in hot haste and had taken his place. Absurd as was the story, it was encouraged by the Republicans, who saw in it a means of still further damaging the Emperor's prestige.

in their comments upon matters political, the writers would not have been obliged to make themselves the assiduous chroniclers of the *faits et gestes* of that particular section of society in order to live. As it is, those records have become a permanent feature and will probably not disappear, however much the stringent rules with regard to political comment be relaxed in the future. At present there appears to be a tendency in the other direction, and the Emperor—who I feel persuaded is liberally inclined—does not know which course to adopt in consequence of the multiplicity of his counsellors, not two of whom appear to be agreed as to the degree of liberty to be granted, and all of whom—not to mince words—are making fools of themselves.

“ Of course, the Cora Pearls, the Skittles, the Païvas, and the rest are only too delighted at all this, and confident of the support of their friends the journalists have entered into open rivalry with the Court beauties—again, of course, on the only ground where such rivalry was possible, namely, Longchamps, the Bois de Boulogne, the Champs-Élysées, and the theatres. M^{de} de Païva’s boxes at the Opéra and at the Italiens are more luxuriously appointed than those of the Emperor and Empress; her diamonds are more costly than the latter’s; Skittles’s pony-chaise, with its pair of black cobs, and its two grooms on coal-black cattle behind, beats anything and everything from the Imperial stables; Cora Pearl’s turn-out throws everything into the shade except Skittles’s; the two latter cut a better figure on horseback than either the Comtesse de Pourtales, M^{de} de Gallifet, M^{de} de Contades, or M^{de} de Persigny; they have only two equals in that respect—the Empress and M^{de} de Metternich. Their carriage-horses, hacks and hunters look better, are better bred and broken in than the best elsewhere, and need not fear comparison with those provided by General Fleury for the use of her Majesty. As may be readily imagined, her Majesty is not particularly pleased. Fleury admits that there is cause for displeasure, but professes himself unable to alter the state of things.”

By that time I was a young man of over twenty, and had paid several visits to London in the season, which enabled me to appreciate the difference—of course from a merely amateurish point of view—between the two capitals in the matter of horseflesh and conveyances. Well, the trained and severely critical eye of the real connoisseur would have unquestionably

awarded the palm for merit to the simple elegance in the Row and the Ladies' Mile; to the uninitiated the spectacle in the Avenue de l'Impératrice (at present the Avenue du Bois de Boulogne) would have appealed with greater effect. It was more showy; nevertheless, it was very beautiful, and the Parisians had, from what I was told, never seen anything like it.

The recollection in the shape of mental pictures has remained bright and vivid throughout these many, many years. I have no need to refer to notes to reconstruct the scenes; in fact, I have no notes bearing on that subject. I have simply to sit still and let the pictures uprise before me. The backgrounds are almost invariably the same; it is either the Arc de Triomphe standing like a grey pawn against a deep blue sky or the masses of dark green of the Bois apparently forming an impenetrable barrier at the end of the Avenue de l'Impératrice.

The first in the field is generally Mme. Feuillant with her two charming daughters, mere girls at that period. The whole of the turn-out is absolutely perfect, from an artistic point of view—I am not quite so sure about the other point—from the small heads of the two big black steppers, with large tufts of Parma violets at their headstalls, to the hood which appears to do duty as a storehouse for similar bouquets large and small. Violets predominate in the whole of the arrangement; they are conspicuous in the bonnet of Mme. Feuillant herself—a bonnet with a vallance, and which enframes the face like a portrait; the footman and coachman have hugh nosegays of violets, the tint of which harmonizes admirably with the collars and cuffs of their dark green liveries.

More conspicuous was the carriage of Mme. de Metternich. It was yellow, and yellow had almost entirely disappeared in those days, to be revived, however, later on. But in the early sixties only Mmes. de Gallifet, de Jancourt, and the Austrian Ambassadress patronized that colour.

Then came Rothschilds' turn-outs, always more remarkable for their magnificent horses than for the beauty of their carriages, and hard upon them the landau of Mdle. Schneider, who as yet was not the Duchesse de G  rolstein, but simply La Belle H  l  ne.

Between half-past four and five there was generally a slight stir of expectation among the occupants of "la Plage," better

known to-day as "le Cercle des Décavés." In a little while there appeared on the horizon four troopers of some crack regiment of the Imperial Guards, flanked by a corporal, and immediately afterwards came the carriage of the little Prince Imperial followed by a captain's escort of the same regiment. To the left of the carriage rode the officer in charge, with a trumpeter by his side; to the right M. Bachon, the Prince's riding master and equerry, in a gold-embroidered green tunic, cocked hat with black feathers, white breeches, and jack-boots. About that period, however, M. Bachon's office was an absolute sinecure, the Prince having met with an accident which disabled him for many, many months from mounting his ponies, and the cause of which accident subsequently became also the cause of his premature and sad death in Zululand.*

Shortly afterwards came the Emperor in his phæton, without an escort of any kind, and only his aide-de-camp by his side. The pace of his Orloff's, which had cost 40,000 francs, was remarkable and somewhat dangerous to those who got in their way, for every now and then, and up to the last, the Imperial whip, forgetting that he was in France and not in England, mistook his nearside for his offside. Not once, but a dozen times, have I heard the indignant Jehu exclaim: "Where is he going to, the brute? Where did he learn to drive?" Though no man looked better on horseback than Napoleon III., he left off riding almost immediately after he ascended the throne, except on special occasions, such as reviews and at Compiègne while out hunting. Already at that time the Emperor had his horses broken in by M. Faverol de Kerbrech, just as he had his new boots worn by his barber. Then came the Empress in her elegant calèche drawn by four bays with postilions, outrider, and grooms, in green and gold, the first-named wearing jockeys' caps half hidden by the golden fringe of the tassels.

ALBERT D. VANDAM.

(*To be Continued.*)

APPENDIX TO PART VIII.

This is a note I made on the day the particulars of the Prince's death came to hand. The note was written entirely from memory, but I feel certain that all my facts are correct. "Several of the Prince's little playfellows had a foreign (English?) riding-master who knew nothing of the classical

* See Appendix to this Chapter.

traditions of the French school, and who taught his pupils things which M. Bachon, the Prince's riding-master, was probably unable and certainly unwilling to teach his. M. Bachon had been second master to the celebrated M. d'Aure, in Paris, afterwards he had taught at Saumur. M. d'Aure, however, though a most brilliant horseman himself, had not founded a school of horsemanship. He was what I should call a brilliant equestrian improvisator rather than a sterling teacher. M. Bachon was an excellent riding-master, and that was all. He had none of the flashes of genius of his chief. He taught the Prince to ride perfectly broken-in ponies, and tacitly discountenanced all showy riding and tricks. And the showy riding and tricks were exactly what the little lad seemed to like most. Fired by the example of his playmates, who vaulted in the saddle while their tiny mounts were going at a gallop, jumped down again, and repeated the feat over and again in spite of their frequent tumbles, the Prince tried to do the same, and one summer evening at Saint Cloud, while the Emperor was looking on, his son came heavily to the ground. He was up again in a moment, and there was no sign that he was badly or even slightly hurt. Had there been such a sign, the Emperor would have been too seriously alarmed to countenance for a single moment the continuation of the game, for assuredly no man ever loved his child better than Louis Napoleon loved his. The boy returned that affection a hundred fold, and it was this sweet trait in his character that caused him to hide his pain, for he fancied his father was annoyed with him for his inferiority to his play-fellows. Was his father annoyed, and did he show his annoyance? I cannot say. Certain it is that the little Prince went on vaulting; young as he was he would not be beaten.

"I know of a similar case of perseverance in his father's life. One severe winter while he was staying at Leamington there was a great deal of skating, and one of the favorite games was to jump over an upturned chair while going at a great pace. Prince Louis attempted the feat several times without success, coming down each time with a tremendous crash that made the lookers-on stare. He would not give in, though, and finally conquered the difficulty.

"To come back to the little Prince, who, after that night went on taking his riding lessons, but so languidly that M. Bachon began to reproach him with laziness. Instead of jumping into the saddle as he was wont to do, he had to be assisted, and in a little while bodily lifted on to his pony. M. Bachon, as yet ignorant of what happened, peremptorily bade him one day to place his foot into the stirrup, and then it all came out. Intensely frightened, the riding-master immediately communicated with the Emperor, who only remembered his son's fall in connection with his pluck. For months and months the child suffered and never mounted his ponies. He recovered gradually, but the habit he had contracted of hoisting himself into the saddle by means of his hands clung to him. Many of his friends in England could bear testimony to this. It was the cause of his death in Zululand. Trusting to his skill, he attempted to jump on to his horse which was already in motion; the holster, of which he caught hold for the purpose, gave way, and he was left to face the foe by himself. A. D. V.